



# Service of Solidarity

As news began to come out of the tragic events in Israel following the Hamas pogrom against innocent civilians, with men, women, and children indiscriminately murdered, and many others taken hostage including old people, Holocaust survivors, and young children, SCoJeC and the Glasgow Rep Council held a Service of Solidarity in Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue.

More than 500 members of the community, parliamentarians, civic and faith leaders, and guests joined together to reflect on the tragic situation. Rep Council President Timothy Lovat opened the service by stating powerfully that "Israel may be our homeland, but Scotland is our home. Let's live and pray together in peace and harmony today, tomorrow, and forever." He then invited the mother of the late Bernard Cowan, who had been murdered in Israel the previous Saturday, to light a memorial candle in memory of her son who was born in Glasgow.

Rabbi Moshe Rubin, the senior Rabbi in Scotland, gave a moving address, sharing how difficult the previous days had been since he led the congregation over Simchat Torah, and of his hope that the Jewish community across Scotland would continue to take comfort from one another.

The Provost of East Renfrewshire Council, Mary Montague, reflected on her lifelong friendships with Jewish neighbours, and commented that all in the Council "share your great sorrow for the losses suffered, and reaffirm our unequivocal support for our Jewish communities."

Psalms were led by Rabbi Chaim Jacobs from Lubavitch, Rabbi David Rose from Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, and Philip Mendelsohn representing Garnethill Synagogue, and the prayer for the injured and kidnapped soldiers and civilians was read by Rabbi Rubin and Dr Mia Spiro, Chair of Jewish Student Chaplaincy Scotland.

East Renfrewshire MP Kirsten Oswald commented "Our local area and our whole country is enriched in so many and varied ways because of our Jewish communities. But that same community is now in shock. Hurting and heartsore, and worried about family in Israel, about friends, and about what comes next as innocent lives are lost to the awful terror and violence ... We are with you, we share in your worry and your sorrow, and we are here to support you."

Stanley Lovatt, Honorary Consul for Israel, described the work done to support Israelis in Scotland, and highlighted the many offers of support he has received. He concluded by reading a letter written to the Scottish Jewish Community from the President of the State of Israel, Isaac Herzog, thanking the community in Glasgow and Scotland more widely for their solidarity, support, and prayers.

First Minister, Humza Yousaf MSP then spoke powerfully about his wish to be with the Jewish community that evening, saying "Your grief is my grief." He spoke of his fears for his wife's family in Gaza, and joined the community in praying for an end to the pain caused to so many, stating unequivocally, "I stand in solidarity with Scotland's Jewish community who have lost members of their community in the senseless and horrific attacks we witnessed last Saturday in Southern Israel. I want to send my condolences to the victims and the families of all those affected by this desperate situation. At a time of great sorrow and sadness, I want you to be in no doubt whatsoever that I, and the Government I lead, stand with you and with all communities who are mourning the loss of innocent life."

As he left the podium, he was embraced by Timothy as the audience applauded his heartfelt speech.



**SCoJeC has received many messages of support from the leaders of other faith communities and from individual people wanting to let us know their concern - thank you all. Your kind words are very much appreciated.**

▶ **Sally Fulton-Foster, Moderator, Church of Scotland:** "Across Scotland, our Jewish friends, neighbours and colleagues grieve the loss of loved ones following the devastating terrorist attacks ... In Scotland, our friends with family in Gaza mourn the loss of loved ones ... Wherever you are, be mindful of your words ... be kind to one another wherever you find each other ..."

▶ **Bishops' Conference of Scotland:** "We pray for peace and ... hope the violence will cease, that civilians and non-combatants will be respected, and that all hostages will be released."

▶ **Ahmadiyya Muslim Community:** "Over the past few days, hundreds of Israelis and Palestinians ... have been killed or injured as a result of senseless violence and bloodshed. The killing or harming of innocent civilians is a direct violation of the teachings of the Holy Prophet of Islam ... We extend our deepest sympathies and prayers to all those who have been left bereaved or affected in any way. Our hearts go out to them all."

▶ "There are many of us here in Scotland who stand with Israel and pray you are safe. I pray each night for the babies, children, and other hostages, and cry for those murdered so brutally. Stay safe, stay strong, and know you are not alone."

▶ "Although I am not of Jewish descent, my heart is ever with the Israelis who have been so unjustly attacked despite their good work all over the world."

▶ "My unwavering support of Israel's right to defend itself and protect the only true democracy in the Middle East will not be silenced, not by sport or any walk of society."

ISSUE 77 • DECEMBER 2023 • CHANUKAH 5784



**Scottish Council of Jewish Communities**

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# Happy 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## TO CALDERWOOD LODGE!

BARRY BERLOW-JACKSON

As part of Calderwood Lodge's 60th anniversary celebrations, a very successful brunch was held at the school, attended, amongst others, by many former pupils and staff.

The Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis, attended *shacharit* at the school and chatted with guests before his speech which spoke warmly of Calderwood and of the significance of the 60th anniversary. The Chief Rabbi opened the new building in 2017, and his support and rapport with the children has always been highly valued.

Other speakers included former headmistress Dianna Wolfson, the school's chaplain Rabbi Moshe Rubin, Rep Council President Timothy Lovat, Depute Head Stephanie Hughes, Marice Alexander, who was one of the first pupils when the school originally opened 60 years ago, and SCoJeC Chair Nicola Livingston.

The event, which was fully subscribed, raised community spirits following the horrific events of October 7th. Everybody enjoyed hearing the school choir, and – with thanks to the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre – there was a slideshow of old photographs of the school, pupils, and past events. The brunch was organised by the Parent Council but made possible by help from SCoJeC, and funding from the Community Trust, the Netherlee and Clarkston Trust, and the Youth Fund.

COLUMN FAR RIGHT - CALDERWOOD'S EARLY DAYS, PHOTOS FROM THE 1960'S

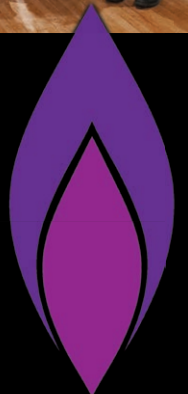
### The Chief Rabbi's visit to Scotland

As well as participating in the Calderwood celebrations, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis met communal leaders at Giffnock Newton Mearns Shul (below). He also held discussions with students in both Glasgow (bottom left) and Edinburgh (bottom right), showing an empty chair representing the hostages abducted by Hamas, and heard about some of the current difficulties they are facing on campus as a result of pro-Palestinian demonstrations and other responses to the current situation in Israel and Gaza.



### Preparing for Holocaust Memorial Day

On 27 January 2024, communities across the UK will come together to mark Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2024. The theme for HMD 2024 is Fragility of Freedom. In every genocide that has taken place, persecuted communities have had their freedoms systematically restricted and removed. The erosion of freedoms is part of a process that can lead to acts of mass violence and murder. Despite this, in every genocide there are those who risk their own freedom to help others, to preserve others' freedom or to stand up to the regime. For information about Holocaust Memorial Day, to find local events, and educational resources for teaching about the Holocaust, see [www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk).





# What we Do Makes a Difference

DITZA HOPPENSTEIN

We woke up Simchas Torah morning, October 7, to a call of constant booms. Then sounded the siren. Although, thank G-d, the booms, the sirens, and the drone of war planes has become less constant, the clarion call that sounded on Simchas Torah has been increasing in volume.

Who is for good and who is for evil? Who is for truth and who is for lies? A clarion call that has echoed through the ages. As we enter the month of Chanukah we can hear the cry of Matisyahu (the father of Judah the Maccabee) echo down to us, "Mi l'Hashem, elai!", "who is for G-d, to me!". A call to stand and fight for good, truth, and G-d.

On October 7 the stage lights of the world were turned on yet the world turned so dark. So much evil was revealed. People who claimed to be moral are celebrating and calling for the death of Jews.

So, so much darkness. Yet how have we responded? With so much light. So much love, care, and giving. We have responded by unifying, and working on ourselves, and improving.

In a poetic verse in the Torah, our teacher Moses compares the Jewish people to vegetation after a storm. Just as vegetation grows and thrives after storm winds and rains, so too when evil storms rage through the world do we grow, improve, and increase light.

Chanukah is the darkest time of the year and as we light our Chanukah candles we dispel some of that darkness. There is a discussion between the Sages, the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel, whether we should reflect the Chanukah miracle by lighting eight candles on the first night and decrease by one each night or to start by lighting one candle on the first night and increase by one each night. It was decided that lighting one candle on the first night and increasing as we go on would be the correct way.

On a deeper level this discussion was about how to fight evil and increase light in the world and in ourselves. Fire has two sides to it. It can burn and destroy or it can give light and warmth.

We can either fight evil by uncovering and putting out those destructive fires in the world, and more importantly within ourselves. Or we can fight evil by increasing the good that we do and improving the light that we shine forth.

By lighting in increasing number our Sages are telling us on what to focus when fighting and eradicating evil. Increase the light within us and consequently within the world, and eventually there will be no more space for evil and darkness, G-d willing soon.

We have already seen that this is our response. Let's continue. Small lights also make a difference. Turn to G-d with an extra prayer, learn some Torah, greet people with a smile, try to forgive a slight, phone someone who could do with some friendship, love yourself. There are so many candles for us to light.

We can and we do make a difference. Rav Tzaddok said that just as man must believe in G-d, man must believe in himself. What we do matters. What we do makes a difference. For real.

Let's light those Chanukah candles.

## Winter Calendar

**Chanukah** Evening Thu 7 Dec  
to Fri 15 Dec

1st of 8 candles after dark Thu 7 Dec,  
8th of 8 candles after dark on Thu 14 Dec

**Fast of Tevet** Fri 22 Dec

**Tu b'Shevat** Thu 25 Jan

**Fast of Esther** Thu 21 Mar

**Purim** Sun 24 Mar

Megillah readings on Sat night and Sun morning

**Shushan Purim** Mon 25 Mar

# Interfaith Reception WITH HRH PRINCESS ANNE

Her Royal Highness Princess Anne joined Deputy First Minister Shona Robison and some two hundred faith leaders and community activists from across Glasgow's diverse communities, including the Senior Rabbi of Scotland, Moshe Rubin, along with Glasgow Jewish Representative Council President Timothy Lovat, SCoJeC Engagement and Events Manager Demi Franks, and SCoJeC External Engagement Manager Kirsty Robson, for this year's Interfaith Glasgow Civic Reception to mark Scottish Interfaith Week 2023.

The beautiful walls of the City Chambers echoed with enthusiasm, conversation, and warmth, much needed at present. Indeed, the evening commenced with a minute's silence to pay respect to all those affected by current events in the Middle East.

Her Royal Highness Princess Anne addressed those in attendance, speaking emotively on the importance

of "helping the young, the children ... the opportunity to grow up and play their part in their communities," As well as acknowledging and paying homage to the important work Interfaith Glasgow and Scottish Interfaith Week have done for many years in breaking barriers and bringing together communities. Her stirring and inspiring words felt all the more poignant in times like these.

Amongst other speakers, Deputy First Minister Shona Robison highlighted and praised Glasgow's amazing and unique diversity, and cross-cultural open-mindedness.

Throughout the evening videos of Interfaith Glasgow's work were shown, and there was plenty of time for break-out conversations, with a facilitator on each table promoting and leading cross-community dialogue and discussion.





# Being Jewish in Scotland *the Videos!*

*Being Jewish in Scotland*, the highly acclaimed video filmed last year by Red Sky Productions for the BBC, is now available on SCoJeC's website!

Jewish people are known to have lived in Scotland since at least the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century but the first formal Jewish Community, dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Edinburgh. Numbers increased until after WWII when around 20,000 Jewish people lived in Scotland, as now, in every area of the country. Today the Community remains vibrant but has shrunk to between 6,000 and 8,000, with many people identifying as ethnically rather than religiously Jewish.

This video tells their story through a series of intimate, contemporary portraits.

Watch at [www.scojec.org/bjis-video.html](http://www.scojec.org/bjis-video.html)



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## Armistice Day 2023

The annual Glasgow Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women Remembrance Sunday parade and service was led by local brigade commander Monty Cowen who, together with Rep Council Treasurer Barry Berlow-Jackson, laid wreaths at the Newton Mearns war memorial. Those marching with the AJEX contingent included Rabbi Moshe Rubin, East Renfrewshire MP Kirsten Oswald, and standard bearers from the 5th Giffnock Guides.

East Renfrewshire Provost Mary Montague, Kirsten Oswald, and Renfrewshire Deputy Lieutenant Philip Rodney, attended the service, which, for the first time, was held in Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue. In his memorial address, Rabbi Rubin spoke about the values that soldiers stand for - freedom of religion, civil liberties, dignity for all, decency, respect, and rights for all. Rep Council Administrator Evy Yedd read the names of Jewish people in Glasgow who were killed in action, as well as Canadian and Polish servicemen who died on active service and are buried in Glenduffhill Cemetery. Following memorial prayers, and a speech from SCoJeC Treasurer Philip Mendelsohn, the last post and reveille were sounded by Bugler Robin Thompson.



## Lost Composers of the Holocaust

SCoJeC was delighted to support the first post-pandemic event of the Arran Jewish Cultural Association, a piano recital by American music professor, researcher, and pianist Deborah Nemko in the Lamlash Community Theatre as part of the annual McLellan Arts Festival.

Dr Nemko presented a programme of music by composers whose work and lives were impacted or lost during the Holocaust, and the stories behind them. The audience heard the cheerful works of Dutch pianists Fania Chapiro and Rosy Wertheim, who offered secret concerts and turned to composing rather than participate in Nazi-sponsored events, and the jazz-inspired works of Czech composer Erwin Schulhoff, which were prematurely silenced by his arrest in 1941 and subsequent death. The story of Hans Gál, a successful Jewish musician who fled to Edinburgh when his career in Austria was cut short by Nazi suppression, provided a Scottish connection. The last scheduled piece was an irrepressibly bubbly song by Willy Rosen, who was murdered in Auschwitz in 1944. Dr Nemko commented, "I hope to promote an understanding of the difficulties Jewish musicians faced composing music in hiding, in concentration camps, and as refugees. Erwin Schulhoff and Pavel Haas lost their lives in the camps. For this reason, I play the works featured in the concert as a living testament to the struggles and courage of their creative lives."

Barb Taub, co-ordinator of the Arran Jewish Cultural Association said, "Although Arran has relatively few Jewish residents, the island as a whole is remarkable in its enthusiasm and willingness to embrace other cultures. Almost every event we've sponsored has been packed, and we've often had to turn people away - this event was no exception. The pandemic set us back, but we're looking forward to working with SCoJeC to reconnect with island residents and visitors." For more info about Arran Jewish Cultural Association, contact [arran@scojec.org](mailto:arran@scojec.org).

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- ◆ **SCoJeC is grateful to:**
- ◆ Glasgow Jewish Community Trust.
- ◆ Eloise Bishop, for photos p1.
- ◆ Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, for Calderwood historical photos p2.
- ◆ **Help SCoJeC help your community:**  
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